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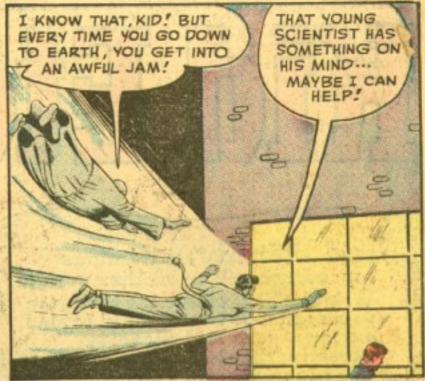
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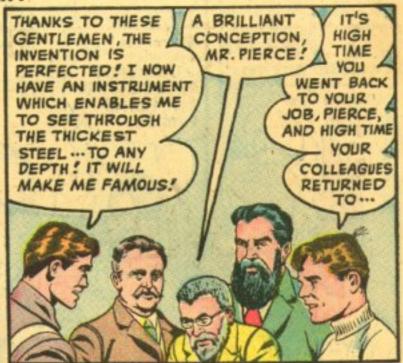




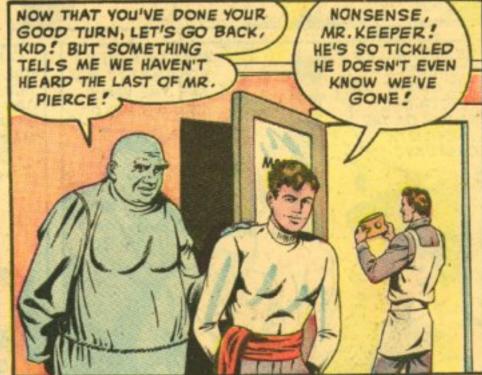


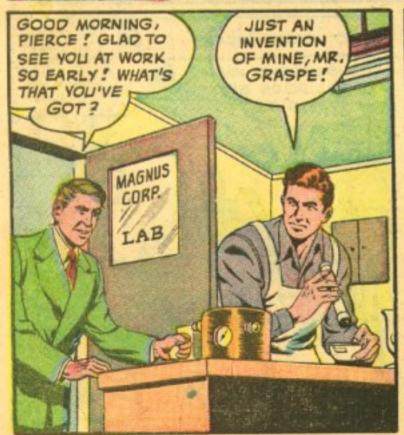




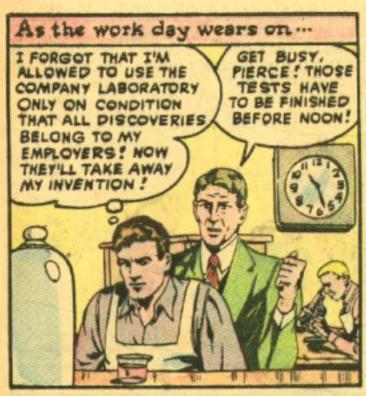








































































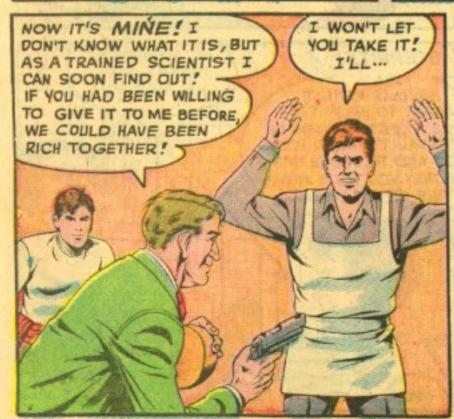








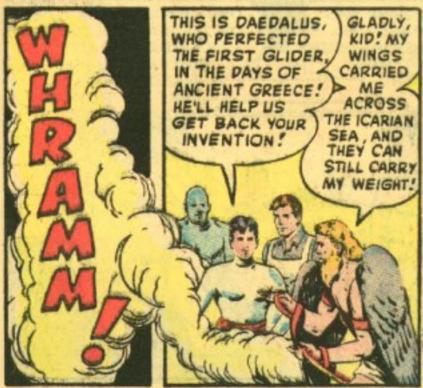






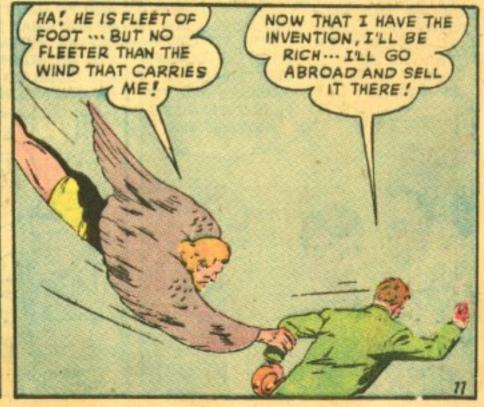












































As Kid Eternity utters the magic word, a strange figure, Jean Valjean, appears...

JEAN VALJEAN, THE HERO OF VICTOR HUGO'S GREAT MONSIEUR VALJEAN, WARN THE MAN WHAT IS IN STORE FOR HIM IF HE DOES NOT RETURN THE LOAF OF BREAD!

YES, KID ETERNITY! I WOULD SPARE ANY MAN THE HORROR I ENDURED, IF I CAN POSSIBLY DO SO BY TELLING HIM









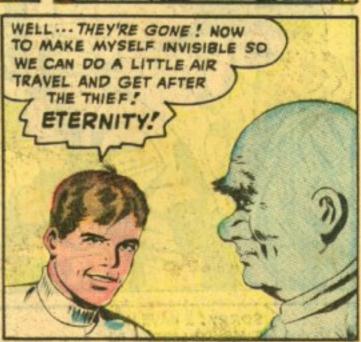




































































































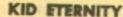














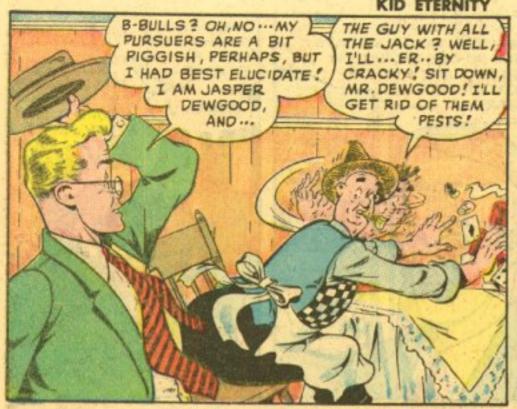






























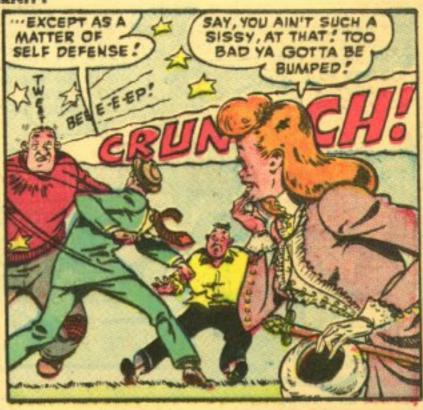


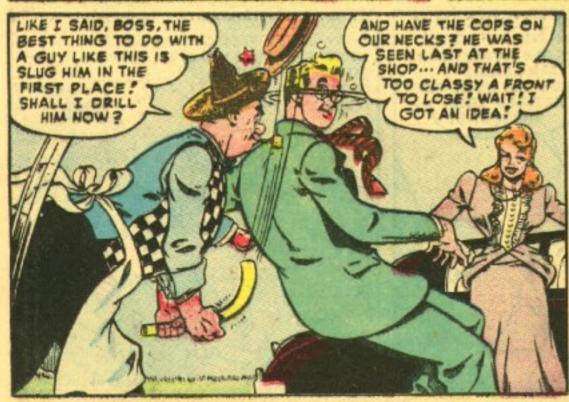








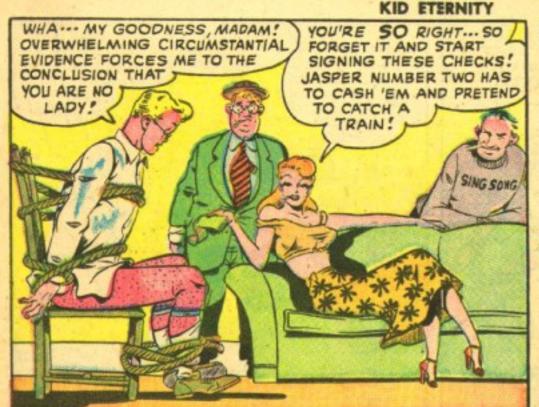






















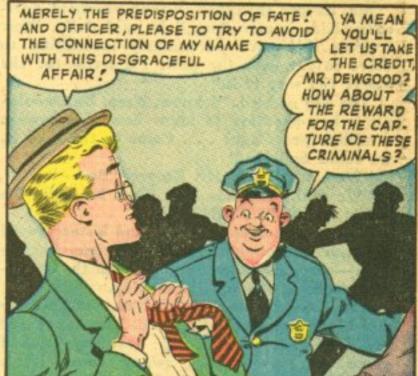
















# DESERT Drama

IT WAS strictly a new idea with Kid Eternity. When he first thought of it, he hesitated telling Mr. Keeper, his constant companion. Not that Keep wasn't an understanding old chap—he was. But quite often he regarded the Kid's ideas as crackpot.

They had come down from a fleecy cloud and were standing on a sand dune in the Mojave Desert. Kid Eternity glanced around at the sere, barren terrain and shook his head.

"I wonder," he said, "what it was like here a million years ago? What were the people like, and what grew here? Certainly it's a

dead enough place now."

Mr. Keeper shrugged. "Your youthful curiosity, Kid, is refreshing," he said drily. "But I don't think it's particularly interesting to delve so far into the past. I'll settle for the desert the way it is."

The Kid nodded. "I know, Keep. But wouldn't it be something to know how things were a million years ago? . . . Come to think of it,

we could find out."

"We could," said Mr. Keeper. "But-"

"We will," said the Kid. Then he spoke the

magic word, "ETERNITY!"

The present dropped away and history raced backward through the mists of time. Back back—through milleniums, through the chang-

ing epochs of the world's making.

And then the mad race halted. Kid Eternity and Mr. Keeper looked around. The desert had vanished. The shimmering heat waves had given way to writhing swamp fogs. Where there had been only stunted cacti and blazing sand, giant tree ferns grew, and the warm ooze underfoot swarmed with the lower forms of life.

Kid Eternity pointed excitedly into the air. Circling on widespread wings was a monstrous bird-like animal, its huge mouth open and rows of sharp teeth showing.

"A pterodactyl," said Mr. Keeper. "We must be on our guard. We have gone back probably

more than a million years. Look there!"

The Kid turned and gazed in the direction Keep indicated. A great dinosaur lurched out of the fern forest, snorting and pawing the wet ground. The big animal stopped, glared at them, and then made off in another direction.

"Well," said Kid Eternity, "we know there are plenty of animals around here. Now I won-

der about the people, if any."

Mr. Keeper said, "I for one am not too interested in the inhabitants of this lost world."

"But that's what we came back for, Keep."
The Kid raised a hand. "Listen!"

A low rumbling sound filtered through the thick fern trees. It grew louder, until the very ground shook underfoot. Then a dozen or more buffalo burst into view on the wide plain that lay beyond the forest of ferns.

The Kid and Keep hurried to an opening in the vegetation and peered out. The buffalo herd was in mad flight. Pursuing it was a flock of bird-like creatures that at first glance seemed to have humps on their backs. Then Kid Eternity pointed in great excitement. "Look, Keep! Those things are being ridden by men!"

The strange bird-creatures were closing in on the buffalo herd. When the riders leaned far over the necks of their mounts, the Kid could see that each man held a long lance in

one hand

Now the hunters began hurling their lances. A buffalo somersaulted, rolled over a couple of times, and lay still. Instantly his killer hopped off his bird-creature and stuck the buffalo with a stone knife.

"Why, they're real cave men," exclaimed Kid Eternity. "Look how hairy they are! Keep, we've probably stumbled upon the original man. Perhaps we can go back and tell modern scientists about our find."

Mr. Keeper made a wry face. "Perhaps. But they'll only laugh at you, Kid. My experience with modern scientists places them in a singular category: they are unbending skeptics."

As the two figures from Eternity stood watching the hunt, the Kid suddenly cried

out.

"Keep! One of those men tumbled from his mount! Look, he's lying on the ground. Maybe he's hurt. I'll go see."

Kid Eternity was off like a sprinter. Mr. Keeper followed in a more leisurely manner, and arrived at the spot just as The Kid was bending over the fallen hunter.

"There's nothing I can do unless I become visible," The Kid said. "So here goes-Eterni-

tv!"

Instantly the Kid became a flesh-and-blood boy. He now went to work on the stunned cave man. The man had a growing lump on his forehead where it had struck a rock when he tumbled from his mount.

The Kid massaged the lump gently, and at last the cave man opened his eyes. They were small, bloodshot eyes, like those of an ape. Now they opened wide in terror as they saw the strange boy. "Take it easy," soothed Kid Eternity. "I'm trying to help you. Are you hurt any place else?"

The man gave a guttural grunt in reply. Then he struggled up on one elbow and gazed around the plain. The herd of buffalo was gone, as were the other hunters.

"Watch him," warned Mr. Keeper, as the cave man felt for the ugly stone knife stuck through a leather cord at his waist. "I don't like his looks at all."

The Kid laid a hand on the man's shoulder and squeezed gently. "I'm your friend," he told him. "Tell me, where do you live? I'll help you home."

The hairy one suddenly made a lunge away from the Kid. At the same time he let out a weird whistle. Evidently it was a signal, for the other hunters now came racing across the plain on their odd mounts. The creatures ran like the wind. Before the Kid knew what was happening they were galloping around at close quarters. Then all at once the men leaped from their mounts and rushed the Kid and their fallen companion.

"Look out!" yelled Mr. Keeper. "Oh, I knew this would turn out bad."

The Kid soon found himself at the bottom of the pile when the hairy men ganged up on him. He felt the breath knocked from his body and the pressure on his chest caused a darkness to grip him. His brain whirled and his senses went black.

He never knew how long he had been unconscious, but he finally gained strength enough to look around. He was in a small stone pit, bound to a post with thongs of rawhide. A thickset man with overhanging brows squatted near the entrance of the pit. His reddish eyes glowered at the captive. He grunted something.

"Come again," said the Kid. "What's your name, pal?"

Mr. Keeper, standing near the Kid, spoke: "I'd suggest that if you don't want to end up in a pot, you'd better become invisible and get out of those ropes."

"A good idea, Keep. . . . ETERNITY!"

Once more Kid Eternity was a boy without substance, and thus the thongs fell away and he stepped free. The cave man guard stared at the empty post, then turned and fled with a wild cry.

Kid Eternity spoke the magic word again, and assumed his solidity.

"You're crazy," said Mr. Keeper. "Now they'll come back and beat you with clubs."

"I have an idea, Keep. I don't think they know what fire is. I'm going to start one."

Mr. Keeper looked on as the Kid began rubbing two rocks together over a pinch of dry moss. Soon a spark caught and smoke spiraled "Eureka!" said the Kid. At that moment the guard returned with a half dozen of his companions. They stood at the pit entrance and gaped at the miracle. They gesticulated excitedly and one of them reached a hand into the blaze. He screamed and hurled his club at the flames. The others laughed. They were all eyeing Kid Eternity with something like respect.

He said to Mr. Keeper: "Fire is new to them, all right, but the novelty will wear off. I've got to think of something that will really bowl 'em over."

"You might show them how to sharpen their knives," said Mr. Keeper. "They look pretty crude."

"A bright idea, Keep." The Kid turned to the nearest cave man. "Hand me your knife, old man," he said. He pointed to the stone weapon. The man slowly removed it from its thong and handed it over.

"Watch," said the Kid. He stuck the knife into the fire, which he had built up with sticks and bits of wood. After a few minutes he drew the knife out with two pieces of wood and, very carefully, wet his finger and touched the flint. A thin scale snapped off. He went down the entire length of the weapon, until one edge was keen. Then he turned it over and worked the other edge. The knife was now a sharp, thin knife.

"Here," he said to the owner. "Try this on an enemy."

The man took the knife and touched the edge with a stubby thumb. His touch was too heavy. A trickle of blood ran from a small wound in the thumb. He cried out, brandishing the knife. The others crowded around, all testing the edge. They were smiling.

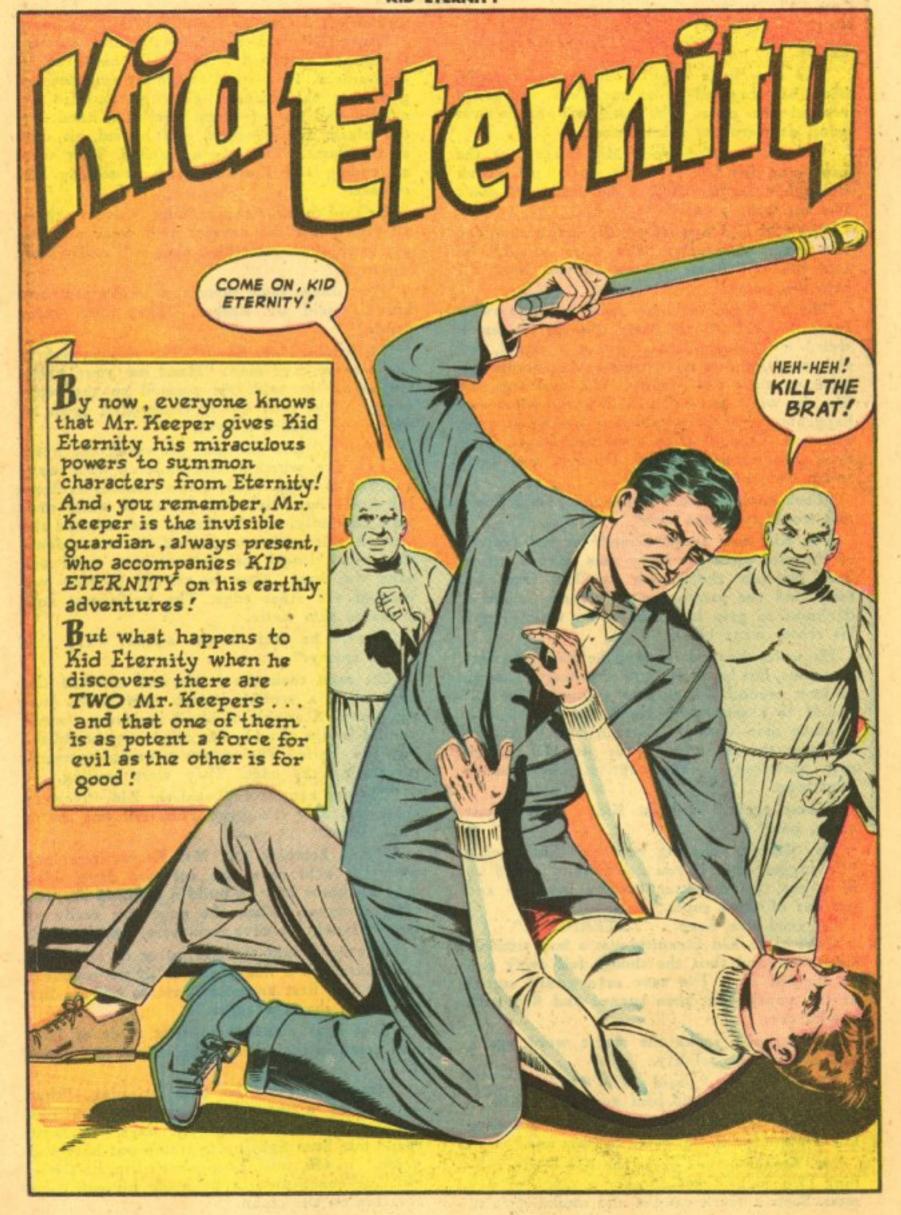
"They've caught on," said the Kid. "Now to show 'em how it's done. This will put me in solid, Keep."

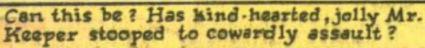
So Kid Eternity and Mr. Keeper remained with the wild cave men for two days, until they all knew how to build a fire and sharpen their weapons. When the pair was ready at last to leave, the cave men were downhearted.

"Anyway," said the Kid, after he and Keep had soared to a floating cloud, "we probably taught our first ancestors how to build a fire and make sharp weapons."

"And thus planted the first seeds of hate and greed in their hearts," observed Mr. Keeper.

"Meaning," said the Kid, grinning, "that because of a moment of exhibitionism like mine, back in the long-gone days, we must spend our lives fighting to stamp out hate and greed. . . Oh, well, Keep, that's life, isn't it—eh?" he concluded, as he made himself comfortable on the cloud.

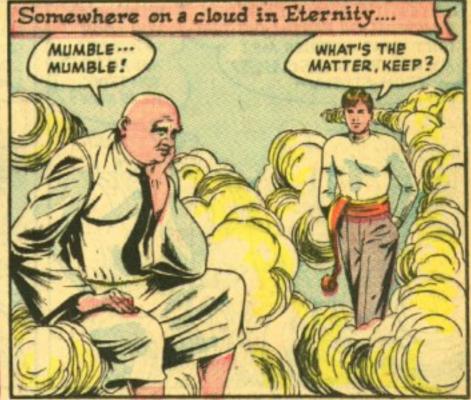
















ALMOST A MILLION YEARS
AGO HE WAS TOSSED OUT
OF ETERNITY BECAUSE HE
WAS JUGGLING THE
BOOKS! HE WAS
REWARDING EVIL AND
PUNISHING GOOD, INSTEAD
OF JUST THE OPPOSITE-







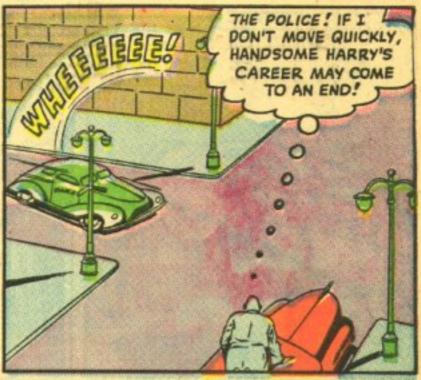






































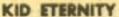
















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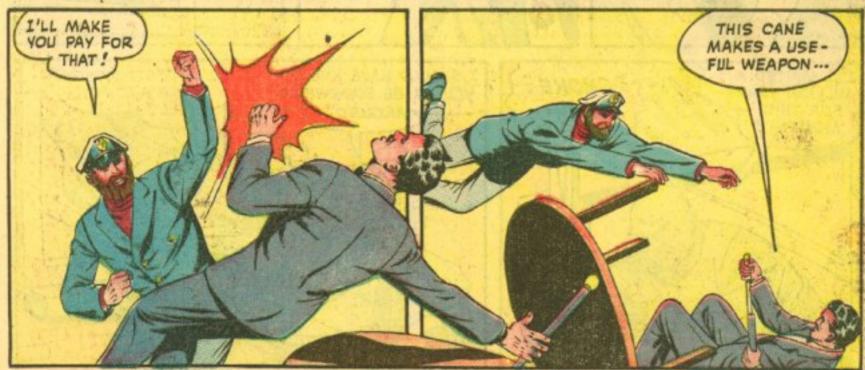














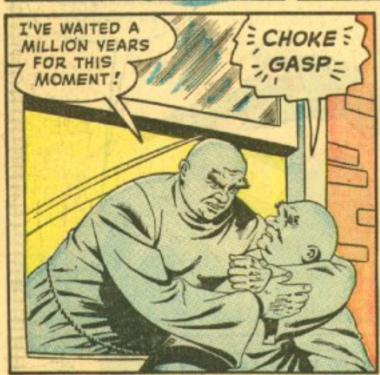




























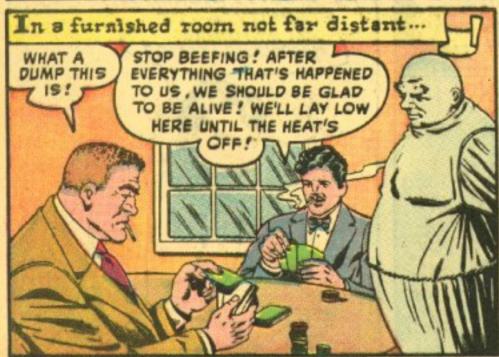


















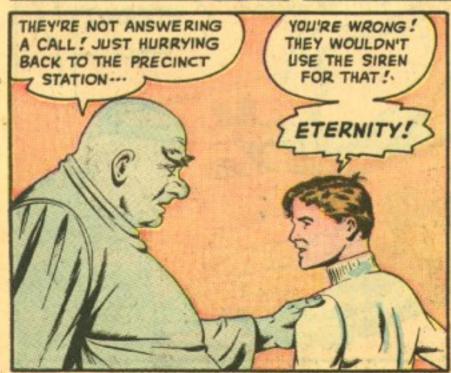
































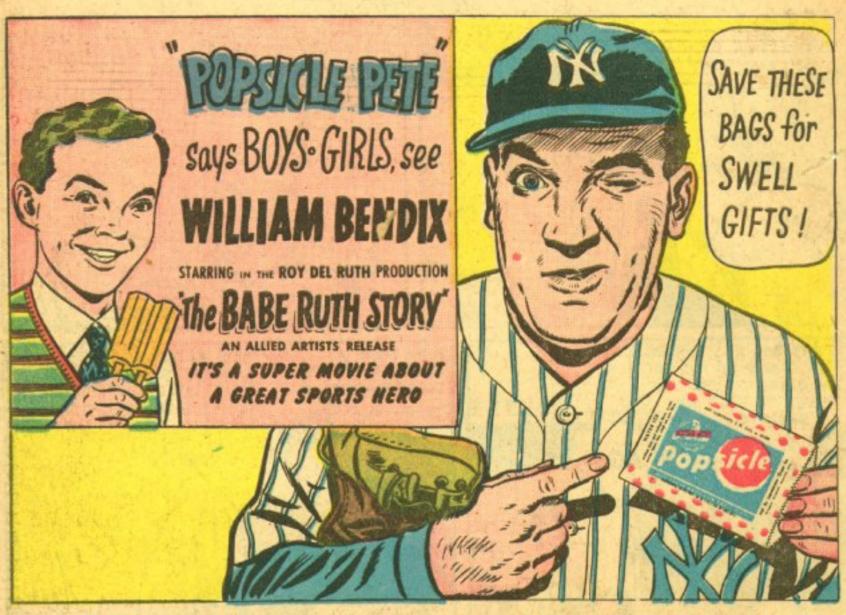














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